

REMARKS

Claims 1-50 are pending, of which Claims 1, 4, 5, 19-21, 26-33, 40, 43, 50, 51, 57 and 83 are independent. Claims 1-3, 5, 14, 15, 22, 24, 25, 28 and 32 stand rejected. The Applicants note with appreciation that Claims 4, 9-13, 19-21, 23, 26, 27, 29-31 and 33-50 have been allowed. The Applicants also note with appreciation that Claims 6-8 and 16-18 would be allowable, but were objected to, as being dependent upon a rejected base claim. Claims 1, 2, 5, 6, 7, 12, 14, 16, 28, 31, 32, 38, and 47 are amended, and new Claims 51-98 are being added to the application. Claim 25 is canceled. For the reasons described below, all claims are now in condition for allowance.

I. Claims 1, 5, 28 and 32 – Message Location

Independent Claims 1, 5, 28 and 32 are amended to include the limitation of the message location, which is similarly recited in allowed dependent Claim 6 and allowed independent Claims 19, 20, 21 and 26. Therefore, Claims 1, 5, 28 and 32 are in condition for allowance. Reconsideration of the rejections of Claims 1, 5, 28 and 32 is respectfully requested. New dependent Claims 78-82 depend from allowed Claim 28. Thus, dependent Claims 78-82 should also be allowed. Acceptance is respectfully requested.

II. Claims 30, 31, 51 and 57 – Removing Node

Claim 30 was allowed. Claim 30 is a means-plus function claim that discusses defining a shareable storage for a cluster being accessible by each node, and removing a node to from the cluster in response to the node losing access to the the shareable storage. Independent Claim 31 is amended to recite a computer program product claim with limitations parallel to those set forth in allowed independent Claim 30. Therefore, Claims 31 is in condition for allowance. Reconsideration of the rejection of Claim 31 is respectfully requested. New Claims 94-98 depend from Claim 31 and, thus, Claims 94-98 are in condition for allowance. Acceptance is respectfully requested.

New independent Claim 51 is a method claim that parallels limitations set forth in allowed independent Claim 30. Therefore, Claim 51 is in condition for allowance. New Claims 52-56 depend from Claim 51 and, thus, Claims 52-56 are also in condition for allowance. Acceptance is respectfully requested.

New independent Claim 57 is a system claim that parallels limitations set forth in allowed independent Claim 30. Therefore, Claim 51 is in condition for allowance. New Claims 58-62 depend from Claim 57 and, thus, Claims 58-62 are also in condition for allowance. Acceptance is respectfully requested.

III. Claims 19, 20, 21 and 26 – Using the Message Location

Claims 19, 20, 21 and 26 were allowed. New dependent Claims 63-67 depend from allowed Claim 19. New dependent Claims 68-72 depend from allowed Claim 20. Therefore, dependent Claims 63-67 and Claims 68-72 are also in condition for allowance. Acceptance is respectfully requested.

IV. Claims 4, 27, 29 and 83 – Membership Based on Accessibility of Shared Storage

Claims 4, 27 and 29 were allowed. New dependent Claims 73-77 depend from allowed Claim 27. Therefore, dependent Claims 73-77 should be allowed. Acceptance is respectfully requested.

New independent Claim 83 is a computer program product claim that parallels limitations set forth in allowed independent Claim 27, which is a method claim. Therefore, Claim 83 is in condition for allowance. New Claims 84-88 depend from Claim 83 and, thus, Claims 84-88 are also in condition for allowance. Acceptance is respectfully requested.

Thus, for the reasons described above, it is respectfully requested that the rejections of Claims 1-3, 5, 14, 15, 22, 24, 28 and 32 be withdrawn. Reconsideration is respectfully requested. In addition, new Claims 51-98 are in condition for allowance. Acceptance is respectfully requested.

Information Disclosure Statement

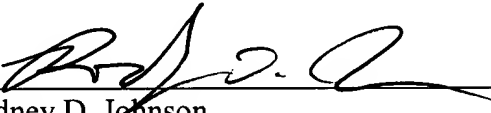
An Information Disclosure Statement (IDS) is being filed concurrently herewith. Entry of the IDS is respectfully requested.

CONCLUSION

In view of the above amendments and remarks, it is believed that all claims are in condition for allowance, and it is respectfully requested that the application be passed to issue. If the Examiner feels that a telephone conference would expedite prosecution of this case, the Examiner is invited to call the undersigned attorney.

Respectfully submitted,

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